

How does the MHLS Board operate?

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Mid-Hudson Library System Board of Trustees
Orientation Program
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Key Documents:

- [BYLAWS OF THE MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM](http://board.midhudson.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/bylaws.pdf)
<http://board.midhudson.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/bylaws.pdf>
- [COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD AND COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES 2014](http://board.midhudson.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/COMMITros-14.pdf)
<http://board.midhudson.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/COMMITros-14.pdf>

1. Organization

a. Authorized by Education Department & Governed by State Law, Rules, & Regulations

1. The System derives its authority from a charter issued by the New York Education Department
2. The System is governed by Section 255 of the New York State Education Law, by all other applicable New York State laws, the Rules of the Board of Regents, the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, and these Bylaws

<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/excerpts/edn255.htm>

b. Fifteen (15) Board Members and Representing Each County

1. Each county in the System shall have three trustees who shall maintain a residence within the county for which they serve
2. An employee of the System or of a member library or of a reading center shall be ineligible for election as a System trustee

c. Two (2) Liaison Members (not voting)

1. A representative designated annually by the Board of Trustees of the Central Library, may serve consecutive terms
2. A representative of the Directors Association designated annually by the Directors Association, may serve consecutive terms

d. Four (4) Board Officers

1. President, Vice-President, Secretary, & Treasurer
2. Officers are elected at the December meeting, by the Board, from among its members. The term of office of all officers is one year. No member of the Board shall serve in any individual office for more than three consecutive full terms.

e. Nine (9) Board Committees

1. Board President appoints members and designates chair
2. Committee Charges (see document at top of page)
3. Committee Meeting Schedule

2. Roles and Goals

- a. Objectives and General Power
 1. **Govern** the System including adopting Bylaws
 2. **Adopt a Plan of Service** and amend it as necessary **in order to foster and improve library service** to the residents of the System area, through the member libraries
 3. **Supervise the expenditure** of the System's funds
 4. **Establish policies** as will insure the achievement of the System's objectives
 5. **Employ a Director** and employ and appoint other staff upon the recommendation of the Director and as the Board deems necessary
 6. **Discharge responsibilities as provided for in the Bylaws**, exercising other responsibilities as may be appropriate

3. Meetings

a. **Quorum**

At all regular and special meetings a majority of the entire Board (15 members) shall constitute a quorum.

b. **Change Agenda**

The order of business may, at any point in the meeting after roll call, be modified by a majority of the trustees present or at the discretion of the presiding officer.

c. **Annual Board Meeting¹**

The regular December meeting shall be the Annual Board Meeting for the purpose of electing officers, reviewing the Minutes of the Annual Membership Meeting, receiving the preliminary annual report of the Treasurer and of the Director, and considering any other business that may properly come before an Annual Board Meeting.

d. **Executive Sessions**

Upon the adopted motion of any trustee at any meeting, the Board may adjourn to executive session for such purposes as are authorized by law. The motion for executive session shall state the reason for the session.

¹ In addition to the Annual Board Meeting in December, MHLS holds an Annual Membership Meeting in October.

1. Executive sessions, meetings from which the public and the news media may be excluded, may be convened during an open meeting for a limited number of specific purposes. Those which usually apply to libraries are:
 - Discussions regarding proposed, pending or current litigation;
 - Collective [bargaining] negotiations;
 - The medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation;
 - The proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value thereof.
2. The board is permitted to take formal action and vote on any matter in executive session except the appropriation of public monies. However, such actions must be detailed in minutes of the executive session. It is usually advisable to adjourn from the executive session and return to the regular meeting to take any formal action or approve specific resolutions.

e. **Robert's Rules**

Robert's Rules of Order shall be observed in governing the transactions of the business of the System

f. **Conflict of Interest**

1. A conflict of interest exists when a matter to be acted upon by the Board confers a direct substantial benefit to any trustee, business, or agency from which a trustee of the Board derives an income or has authority in governance
2. A trustee shall abstain from voting on any matter before the Board which places him or her in a conflict of interest